

Commonly Misused Words and Homonyms

Accept – to take

Except – to exclude; comparative/conditional

Affect – to influence

Effect – to accomplish; result

Coarse – rough; harsh

Course – a class; a direction or route

Its – belonging to it

It's – it is; contraction

Our – belonging to us

Are – from of “to be”

Past – having occurred in time

Passed – form of “to pass”

Patients – those seeking the help of a doctor, dentist, etc.

Patience – a willingness to wait

Quiet – still

Quite – very

Than – as in “greater than”; comparative/conditional

Then – at that time

Their – belonging to them

There – place; location

They're – they are; contraction

To – toward; preposition

Too – also

Two – number

Your – belonging to you

You're – you are; contraction

Weather – outside condition

Whether – as in “whether or not”; comparative/conditional

Who's – who is; contraction

Whose – belonging to whom

Commonly Misused, Misplaced, or Missing Commas

Comma Splice

1. We never go into town during the week, it is too far from our farm.
2. Getting to the museum is difficult, there is one route that I would recommend.
3. I've known Julie since I was six, she's my best friend.

Commas in a Series

1. I like baseball, football, and soccer.
2. My brother and I visited Chicago, New York, and Los Angeles.
3. I want to go to college, get a job, and get married.

BOYSFAN (But, Or, Yet, So, For, And, Nor)

1. I wanted to go to the movies, but I couldn't afford it.
2. She needs to pay her speeding ticket, or she'll lose her license.
3. There were bugs on the ceiling, so we had to replace the screen.
4. Tom went to bed early, for he was extremely exhausted.
5. The rain flooded all the streets around the college, and it was impossible to get to campus.
6. Francesca didn't want to work, nor did she seek a job.

Supplemental Information (also with "who" & "which")

1. Jessica, who will be 16 soon, is looking forward to driving.
2. My old high school, which is in Herkimer, won the basketball game.
3. My brother, Chuck, is excited about the trip, which should be fun.

Two or More Adjectives

1. My new cat is a beautiful, white, long haired kitten.
2. Smoking is a terrible, disgusting habit that grosses me out.
3. I remember it being an extremely dark, eerie night.

Introductory Words/Phrases

1. On your way out of the auditorium, please lock the doors in the back.
2. Once you're done mowing the lawn, can you help me with the laundry?
3. After the morning I've had, I just want to go home and sleep tonight.

Fragments (Need to correct them and they will often require at least one comma)

1. If you want a ride to school. You can give me a call.
2. If my daughter completes her homework. She can have ice cream later.
3. After we pay the bills. We'll have little money left over to live on.